

**Subject:** Please stop and think before cutting funding to CT Libraries

Dear Governor Malloy and everyone involved in the budgeting process,

I know how difficult it is trying to come up with ways to save the State of Connecticut money and make the best possible choices while moving forward. However, the extreme measures that are being proposed in regards to cutting public library funding are extremely detrimental, not only to public libraries, but to everyone in the state.

Public libraries are meant to be bastions for the public. Librarians work toward closing the educational, informational, and digital gap that unfortunately exists in this day and age. We provide warm and safe places for the public to come to relax, work, and learn. Below are a breakdown of what the proposed cuttings actually mean. I hope you will reconsider. The proposed budget not only zeroes out funding but eliminates the enabling statutes that allow needed library programs and services to exist:

#### **Cutting Connecticard means**

- CT residents will no longer be able to borrow from any public library across the state and local libraries will be forced to shut their doors to their neighbors

- The savings CT residents realized through Connecticard (\$68M in 2014 by borrowing 4.5 million items from libraries across the state) will vanish**

If you are looking to save money, will this short term cut really help? If CT residents are no longer allowed to borrow from neighboring libraries, that means each town library will have greater expenditures in purchasing materials. In the second point, the numbers are clear: the state saves \$68 million dollars in 2014 by sharing materials between libraries. Can the state of CT really afford to give up \$64 MILLION dollars?

#### **Slashing Cooperating Library Service Units (CLC) means**

- The Connecticut Library Consortium (CLC), formed by the merger of four CLSUs saving CT taxpayers through coordinated services and efficiencies, will be crippled.

- Without state funding, CLC will severely hampered in its mission of saving public libraries and taxpayers over \$7.1M annually by coordinating the purchase of books and other products for the state's public, school and academic libraries.

This cut affects not only public libraries, but school, and academic libraries as well. In a time when American students are already falling behind, can the state of Connecticut take the chance of further crippling the young minds of tomorrow by cutting funding and access to beneficial library funding and services?

#### **Eliminating Grants to Public Libraries means**

- Cutting this funding hurts the people who need their library the most—CT residents who live in our urban areas where our public libraries struggle to provide basic library programs and services such as literacy (reading, financial and digital), access to government services and so much more.

Eliminating the law that guarantees adequate local funding will throw our local public libraries into chaos not knowing if funding will be available, severely restricting access to information and quite probably leading to public libraries shutting their doors for good.

The majority of services, assistance programs, job applications, homework sites, and general information regarding just about everything has moved from print materials to online materials. There are still people in CT that don't otherwise have access to internet, to a computer, to valuable knowledge and resources they need to be a successful member of the working community. Without access to these services, you are hurting the very people you should be helping.

"So," you might ask, "What SHOULD we do?"

- The Legislature should restore \$2M in funding to Connecticard, Cooperating Library Service Units (CLC) and Grants to Public Libraries
  - Restore \$1.25M (up from \$950,000 in past budget) to Connecticard
  - Restore \$500,000 (up from \$332,00 in past budget) to Cooperating Library Service Units (CLC)
  - Restore \$250,000 (up from \$193,391 in past budget) to Grants to Public Libraries
- \$2M in library funding will save CT's libraries and taxpayers over \$75M annually
  - For every state tax dollar invested, CT's libraries and taxpayers will receive a \$37.50 public service return on investment (375%)
- Without these restorations, the CT's libraries will go from coordination to chaos

By eliminating funding to libraries, you are hurting the very people you are trying to save money. But maybe you don't care about them. Maybe it's all about the bottom line. In which case, I think the real question is, if you didn't go into this job with the notion of doing greater good and helping the most people, why did you take it?

Please reconsider eliminating funding for Connecticard, CLC and Grants to Public Libraries, and introducing legislation that would repeal the statutes that authorize these programs. For the good of Connecticut. For the good of the people. For the good of libraries.

Molly Virello  
Children's Librarian  
Southington Public Library and Museum

We're on Social Media!

[Facebook](#) [Instagram](#) [Twitter](#) [Pinterest](#)

This message contains confidential information and is intended for the individual named. If you are not the addressee you should not disseminate, distribute or copy this e-mail. Please notify the sender immediately by e-mail if you have received this e-mail by mistake And delete this e-mail from your system.'